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E.O. 12958: DECL: 2020/01/27

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SUBJECT: Canada to maintain human rights pressure on Iran at UPR

REF: STATE 7242

CLASSIFIED BY: Scott Bellard, Minister Counselor for Political
Affairs, STATE, POL; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C/NF) Canada agrees with U.S. views and suggested questions and recommendations for the UN Human Rights Council's (HRC) Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Iran (reftel), according to Flavie Major, Deputy Director, and Dane Hiebert, Policy Officer, of the Human Rights Policy Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). Hiebert added that Canada plans to intervene at the February 15 session; he shared a draft copy of Canada's recommendations. Major told poloff that EU member countries of the HRC also plan to intervene as a bloc, Canada learned during recent meetings.

¶2. (C/NF) According to the DFAIT draft, Canada will offer recommendations in the following areas at the Iran HRC UPR:

¶1. The cessation of the repression, arbitrary arrests, detentions, and torture of democracy activists as following the June 2009 elections;

¶2. The recognition of the rights of freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and freedom of association;

¶3. The definition of "national security" in the Islamic Penal Code of Iran;

¶4. The recognition of the rights of minority groups, particularly of the Baha'i community; and,

¶5. The cessation of the use of execution and the halt of all executions of juveniles immediately.

¶3. (C/NF) Major requested information on U.S. plans for support of Asian candidates in the 2010 elections to the HRC. She emphasized Canada's concern about Iran's candidacy and divulged that Canada plans a "quiet campaign" against Iran this year. Canada will not name Iran directly in this campaign, according to Major, but will underscore Canada's commitment to keeping "egregious human rights violators off the HRC." According to Hiebert, Canada is also focusing on the four African seats open in 2010 and believes that there may be more than four candidate countries running for election, including Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt, although he admitted that Canada has no knowledge of how the candidates will be selected by the African bloc.

¶4. (C/NF) DFAIT has funds available for "human rights promotion"

in Iran and would welcome U.S. input on best use of the funds, according to Hiebert. Neither Major nor Hiebert had further detail on the amount of funding available, past use of such funds, and other funding partners. They promised that DFAIT will compile fuller information and forward to Embassy ASAP.

JACOBSON